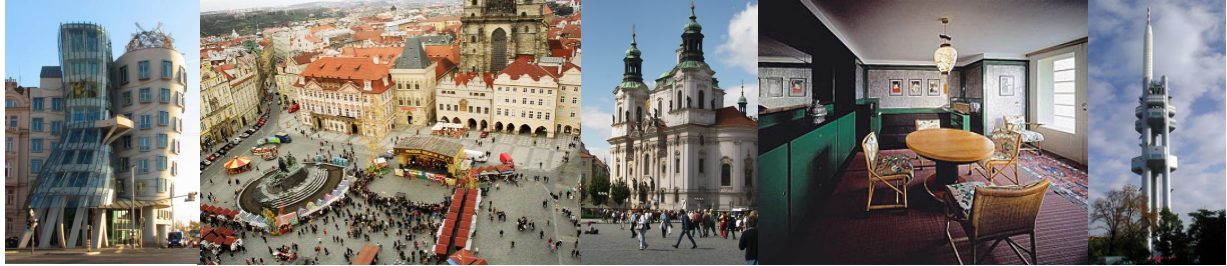




## Historic Prague with a Modern Touch



*Just as for its fascinating past, Prague has made room for modern contemporary times. Take pleasure with us viewing the treasures of the past, of a golden city enriched by its modern dominant buildings.*

*Next to Athens, Rome, Paris, and London, Prague belongs among the oldest cities of Europe. In no other city can we find such well-preserved monuments of all styles. Our steps will bring us not only to unusual medieval sites, but also to the “secrets” of 20th century architecture.*

### Day 1

Arrival to Prague, accommodation in hotel, and an evening in an elegant restaurant. A walk through illuminated Prague.

### Day 2

Breakfast, departure to **Pražský hrad** (Prague Castle). For more than a hundred years, this castle was a residence to princes, kings, and archbishops. Past the Jízdárny (Riding Hall) and Královská zahrada (Royal Garden), we come to Powder Bridge that crosses Deer Moat and then onto the second Castle courtyard to **Chrám sv. Víta** (Cathedral of St. Vitus). This church is the most enchanting structure of the castle complex. The basic building stone of this large Gothic cathedral was laid by Charles IV in 1344 together with his father Jan Luxembourg. After Matthias of Arras, construction continued under Peter Parler. Further, we shall take a



look at **Starý královský palác** (Old Royal Palace), which served as the official residence of Czech monarchy up until the 16th century. Between the White Powder and Dalibor's Tower, we come upon lovely **Zlatá ulička** (Golden Lane). Among the small colored houses in the 16th century belonged homes to the royal guard and to goldsmiths in the 17th century. Later, they became home to the poor, artists, and writers (Frank Kafka among them).



Noontime refreshment and departure to **Müller Villa**.

Luxurious villas and family houses were built in Bohemia and Moravia during the twenties and thirties of the 20th century. Besides the Tugendhat Villa in Brno (UNESCO) by Mies van der Rohe, Prague's Müller Villa (1928-30)—the work of Adolf Loos—stands among the six most important villas of the 20th century.

**Adolf Loos** was born in 1870 in Brno (Czech Republic) and died in 1933 in Vienna. In his articles at the beginning of the century, he stood against the Art Nouveau style and the WienerVerkstatte-Viennese workshop (Ornament & Crime, 1908). Loos built private villas, in which he developed his “Raumplan”—meaning the division of rooms into sizes according to their function. A paradox to Loos’ villas is the traditional arrangement of beautiful materials such as Persian rugs, decorative furniture, and luxurious wood inlay. Departure to the center and leisure time.



Dining in a select Prague restaurant. Evening program: opera, concert, or Laterna Magika—according to availability.

### Day 3

Following breakfast, a walk on **Václavské náměstí** (Wenceslas Square). Emperor Charles IV allowed a “Horse Market” to be built in 1348 in front of the ramparts of the old city. Since the year 1848, the place has been called Wenceslas Square. It was meant to form the center of Prague’s inner city. Its avenue is lined with hotels, cafes, and shops. Created as the representative conclusion of Wenceslas Square is Národní muzeum (National Museum) (1885-90). Even in the 19th century, a dominant feature of Wenceslas Square was the large church Panny Marie Sněžné (Virgin Mary of Snow). This church was blessed by the Emperor himself on the occasion of the death of his first wife Blanca of Valois. Jan Želivsky, a radical Hussite, preached in this church and was responsible for the first Czech defenestration in 1419.



Further on our way, we come to **Karolinum** (Carolinum), the first residence of the oldest university in Central Europe, founded by Charles IV in 1348. Opposite we can see **Stavovské divadlo** (Estates Theatre), which was built by architect Anton Haffenecker for Count Nostitz-Rienka in the year 1783. In the same year, theatre production began with Lessing’s opera *Emilia Galotti*. Here, in 1787, Mozart’s opera *Don Giovanni* premiered.



In the house **U zlatého jednorožce** (At the Golden Unicorn), composer Bedřich Smetana established his first music school in 1848. On the most beautiful square in Prague, Staroměstské náměstí (Old Town Square), we see the Old Town Square’s Old Town Hall. From its tower, we have a beautiful view of Prague. Of great interest is the Astronomical Clock dating from the 15th century. The impressive Hus Monument was completed on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the burning of Czech reformer Jan Hus.

Our attention is yet held by other structures: **kostel Sv. Mikuláše** (St. Nicholas Church) — a work by the famous Baroque master K.I. Dientzenhofer—followed by Goltz-Kinsky Palace and Týnský chrám (Tyn Church) with its beautiful portal by Peter Brandel.

At the end of Celetna Street, we can see the first Cubistic house in Prague, named Dům U Černé Matky Boží (House of the Black Madonna). We shall find inside this house a small museum on Czech Cubism. After a tour, we will take a bus to another modern feature in Prague - the Television Tower dating from 1992. It is the highest structure in Prague (216 m) and is adorned by 10 plastic big infants created by contemporary sculptor David Černý. We will take an elevator to a height of 97 m and experience a wonderful panoramic view of Prague. There we will have our lunch in the panoramic restaurant Tower.



On the way to the hotel we will stop at **kostel Nejsvětějšího Srdce Páně** (Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord). This church is the most important religious building of the 20th century in the Czech Republic. Inspired by old Christian basilicas, this modern and daring building by the project of Slovenian architect Josip Plecnik was erected between the years 1928-32. Free afternoon program.

## Day 4

After breakfast, departure from hotel to the Transport Museum. From here we will take an hour circuitous ride through Prague. The first electric tram in Prague (and in Bohemia) was brought to use in the year 1891. A refreshment will be served during the ride in the train that dates to the year 1908.

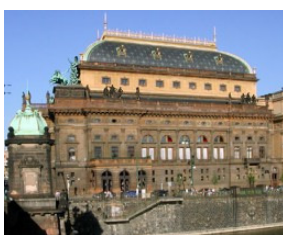


Over and above historical monuments, we shall see other modern buildings—for example, **Tančící dům** (Dancing House) (Ginger and Fred) by architects Frank Gehry and Vlado Milunic. We will enjoy a view of Prague together with a light meal in the restaurant La Perle de Prague. The tram brings us to a lovely part of Prague—**Malá Strana** (Lesser Town). It is Prague's second town, established by Premysl Otokar II in 1257. Visit to **kostel Panny Marie Vítězné** (Church of Our Lady Victorious), the first Baroque church in Prague. It was built in 1613 by architect Giovanni Maria Filippi for German Lutherans. The curiosity of this church is the statue of Infant



Jesus, adored as a miracle “Bambino of Prague.” The interior of the church is adorned by altar pictures from the known Baroque painter Petr Johannes Brandl.

After our tour, we come to Malostranské Square, the center of the Lesser Town since 1257. Its towering feature is the church of St. Nicholas. This church is the most beautiful building from Father and Son Dientzenhofer. W.A. Mozart played on the 18th century Baroque organ during his visit to Prague. Other monuments include Nostický Palace, where Bedrich Smetana worked as a music teacher, and the church of the Virgin Mary under the Chain, which reminds us of the past Johanniter Order—later the Order of Maltese Knights.



Further we come to **Karlův most** (Charles Bridge). The bridge dating from 1357 contains a large gallery of outdoor statues. Along the Moldau we come to **Národní divadlo** (National Theatre), which Czechs call “Little Golden Chapel on the Moldau”. The theatre was built in 1833 from citizen donations and holds a special significance for the Czech people. Passing the modern glass building Laterna Magika, we come to Adria Palace

dating from the years 1923-35 and built upon the Venetian style of Renaissance palaces. It has a very interestingly decorated façade and a very impressive arcade—further examples of modern architecture.



Relaxation at the hotel. Dinner in a typical Prague restaurant. Evening program: Performance at the Singing Fountain.

## Day 5

Breakfast and departure.